UPSC Daily Current Affairs| One Liners 21-06-2025

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History, Art and Culture

International Seminar on Deciphering Indus Valley Script.

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) will organize a three-day international seminar from August 20–22, 2025, in Greater Noida to focus on deciphering the Indus Valley script.

• **Aim** – To decode the Undeciphered Script.

• The event, titled '**Decipherment of the Indus Script**: **Current Status and the Way Forward'**.

• It will bring together Indian and international experts to review progress and chart future research.

• **Research fellowship planned** – ASI is planning to launch a fellowship for scholars to conduct dedicated research on the Indus script as part of its broader push for decipherment.

• **Linked to Tamil Nadu CM's $1 Million Prize –** This initiative follows Tamil Nadu CM M.K. Stalin's earlier announcement of a $1 million prize for anyone who can successfully decode the Indus script, raising global attention.

• The Indus Valley Civilisation was discovered in 1921, and efforts to decipher its script have continued since the first excavation report in 1931, which documented symbols and variants.

Polity & Governance

Sakura Science Programme

Recently, the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), organized the programme offers a short-term immersive experience in Japan's scientific ecosystem and cultural heritage under Sakura Science Programme.

• **Scientific and Cultural Exchange** – It is initiated by Japan in 2014, the programme invites talented students and researchers from Asia, including India, to experience Japan's advancements in science, technology, and culture.

• **Student Participation** – In 2025, 20 Indian students from Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and government schools in remote regions like Ladakh, Mizoram, and Andaman were selected to visit Japan under the High School Track.

• **Promotes Innovation and NEP Goals –** The programme supports India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 by fostering experiential learning, global exposure, and innovation among youth through collaborative international visits.

• **Participants from Remote Regions –** Students were chosen from Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and government schools in Andaman & Nicobar, Ladakh, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura, ensuring inclusivity.

International Relations and Issues

India-Croatia Term Defence Partnership

Recently, PM Modi announced plans for a long-term defence cooperation roadmap, focusing on joint production, training, and military exchanges.

• **Joint ventures in space and coastal infrastructure –** India invited Croatian participation in space research and Sagarmala-linked coastal development, including shipbuilding and port modernization.

• **Boost to strategic industries and investments –** India plans to increase investments in Croatia's key sectors like pharma, semiconductors, IT, clean and digital technology, and agriculture.

• **Academic and cultural collaboration –** India and Croatia will jointly fund research projects, enhance Indology studies, and implement a 5-year cultural exchange programme.

• **Support for mobility agreement –** India and Croatia will soon sign a mobility pact for people-to-people ties; both nations reiterated commitment to dialogue over war, condemning terrorism.

Economy

Foreign Direct Investment Decline

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows into India fell by 1.8% in 2024, amounting to $27.6 billion, less than half of 2020 levels.

• **Shrinking role in capital formation –** FDI's share in India's total capital formation dropped to 2.3% in 2024, down from 8.8% in 2020, reflecting its diminishing role in India's development financing.

• **India dominates south Asia's FDI –** Despite the decline, India received 80% of South Asia's total FDI inflows and contributed to over a quarter ($110 billion) in projected capital expenditure in Asia.

• **Rise in manufacturing projects** – India saw record levels of manufacturing investment, particularly in semiconductors and basic metals, even as overall FDI declined.

• **M&A activity declined due to divestments** – Cross-border mergers and acquisitions fell, partly due to asset sales to Indian firms (e.g., Disney's Star India merger with Viacom18 and exits in pharma sector).

SEBI Relaxes Hive-Off Rule

Recently, SEBI has allowed merchant bankers to carry out unregulated advisory and consultancy services without creating a separate legal entity, reversing its earlier 2024 directive.

• **Hiving off** – It refers to the requirement that financial intermediaries like merchant bankers, must carry out unregulated or non-core activities (like consultancy or advisory) through a separate legal entity, rather than within the regulated entity.

• **SEBI's earlier rule (Dec 2024) –** SEBI had mandated that merchant bankers must hive off their non-regulated businesses to ensure risk separation and regulatory clarity.

• **Boost to Non-fund revenue –** This relaxation may enhance fee-based income and profitability for merchant bankers, especially as their traditional roles in corporate actions have reduced.

• **Investor protection emphasized** – Despite the relaxation, SEBI maintained that only "credible and well-governed" entities would be permitted to act as intermediaries, reinforcing investor confidence.

Security

Operation Sindhu

The evacuation of Indian students from Iran under Operation Sindhu was carried out by the Government of India

• Amid the ongoing Israel-Iran conflict, the Indian government launched Operation Sindhu to rescue 110 students, primarily from Urmia University, Iran.

• **Multi-Nation transit via Armenia –** Students were moved overland to Yerevan, Armenia, on June 17 and then flown to New Delhi after a 52-hour journey across borders.

• **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)** – Led the diplomatic and logistical efforts.

• **Majority of evacuees from Jammu & Kashmir –** Of the evacuees, 94 students were from J&K, with others from Delhi, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan.

Miscellaneous

NeSDA (National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment)

Recently the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG) released its 25th monthly "NeSDA Way Forward" report in June 2025, highlighting significant developments in digital public service delivery.

• ***NeSDA*** *– It is launched by DARPG in* ***2019****, that tracks the progress of e-service delivery across States/UTs and Central ministries.*

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Seven focus areas —Finance, Social Welfare, Local Governance, Education, Labour, Tourism, and Environment.

• **e-Services –** A total of 21,062 e-services are being provided across all States and Union Territories, with Local Governance & Utility Services being the top sector.

• **New e-Services added –** States/UTs added 424 new e-services, with Tripura leading in service additions across all focus sectors.

• **Mandatory e-Services achieved –** Out of 2,016 mandatory e-services, 1,599 are now online, reaching 79% saturation; Maharashtra and Uttarakhand achieved 100% saturation.

• **Unified service portals –** Several States/UTs are shifting to single unified portals, enhancing real-time transparency and ease of access for citizens.

• The report includes three new assessment parameters Open Government Data, e-Participation, and Emerging Technologies, showcasing portals like GST and National Cyber Crime Reporting as best practices.

Advanced Tribal Health Research Centre at AIIMS

Recently the Ministry announced the establishment of a National Tribal Health and Research Institute under AIIMS Delhi to study tribal health issues and guide policy formulation.

• The Centre will offer outpatient and inpatient facilities, oversee research on tribal health concerns, and serve as a reference institution supporting healthcare and disease surveillance across tribal-dominated regions.

• **Bhagwan Birsa Munda Drug Development Prize –** A new drug development prize (Rs 1–10 crore) was announced to incentivize the discovery of new treatments for Sickle Cell Disease (SCD), which currently has only one approved drug.

• **Centre of competence in 15 tertiary hospitals** – Centers of Competence (CoC) offering state-of-the-art SCD diagnosis and management will be set up in 15 top hospitals including AIIMS, functional by November 2025.

• **Mission to Eliminate SCD by 2047** – India aims to eradicate sickle cell disease by 2047, with focused screening, awareness, and treatment in tribal-dominated areas under the Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission.

• **World Sickle Cell Day** – Observed on June 19, 2025, events were held across 17 mission states and 365 districts, emphasizing public awareness and support for tribal communities affected by the disease.

National Reading Day

National Reading Day is celebrated every year on June 19 to promote reading habits across India. In the Kannampadi tribal settlement, the new libraries were inaugurated to coincide with this day.

• **Libraries in tribal areas** – As part of Reading Day celebrations, three libraries were established at Memari, Kathitheppan, and Kollathikkavu in the Kannampadi tribal settlement within the Idukki Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala.

• **Theme** – Reading is the True Addiction

• The Forest Department launched the initiative with the theme 'Reading is the true addiction', aiming to make books accessible in remote tribal areas.

• **Access to education and news** – These libraries are stocked with children's books, novels, study guides, and newspapers, helping students prepare for PSC exams and stay informed.

• Tribal Empowerment Through Literacy

• The initiative also aims to reduce educational disparity by training local youth as librarians, and possibly introducing coaching programs, aligning with the spirit of National Reading Day to empower through reading.



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